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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

OF THE

ST. ALBANS RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR 1937,

BY

RICHARD R. K. PATON,

M.B., CH.B. GLASGOW, D.P.H. CAMBRIDGE,

Medical Officer of Health, Etc., Etc.

INCLUDING THE REPORT

OF THE

Sanitary Inspector and Cleansing Superintendent

(Mr. DAVID J. GRAHAM, M.R. San.I.)

ST. ALBANS :

PRINTED BY H. A. RICHARDSON, LTD., 5 HIGH STREET.

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Officers of the Council engaged in Health Work.

Clerk (full time)	Mr. E. F. G. LAWS.
Surveyor (full time)	...	...	Mr. C. HUSKINSON.
*Medical Officer of Health	...	...	Dr. R. R. K. PATON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
*Sanitary Inspector (whole time)	...	...	Mr. D. J. GRAHAM, M.R. SAN. I., M.S.I.A.

* Contribution made to Salary from Exchequer Grants.

To the Chairman and Members of the St. Albans Rural District Council.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you the Report for the year 1937, of the Medical Officer of Health for the District over which you preside.

Social Conditions and Occupations.

The District is comprised of seven parishes, consisting of villages and scattered cottages.

The occupation is largely agricultural, but there are several small factories in the District, and some of the inhabitants work in the neighbouring towns.

There are at present no conditions in the area or environment which may be regarded as prejudicial to the general health.

General Statistics.

Area, 32,084.

Population (1931) 9,067 males and 10,504 females.

Population, residential (1937), 20,260.

Number of inhabited houses (1937) 4,047.

Plans passed for new houses, 1937, by private enterprise 582.

The following table gives the provisional Vital Statistics for England and Wales, etc., for the year 1937:—

	Birth Rate per 1000 Popula- tion.	Death Rate per 1000 Popula- tion.	Deaths under One Year per 1000 Births.
England and Wales	14·9	12·4	58
122 County Boroughs and Great Towns, including London	14·9	12·5	62
143 Smaller Towns (1931 Census Populations 25,000 to 50,000).	15·3	11·9	55
London	13·3	12·3	60
St. Albans Rural...	14·6	7·1	20

During the year 297 births were notified: 170 males and 127 females. Of these, 8 males and 6 females were illegitimate. There were 156 deaths notified (74 males and 82 females) giving a death rate of 7.7 per 1000 population. To be comparable with the rest of the country this rate is reduced to 7.1 per 1000 population,

There were 6 deaths of children under one year, and the Infant Mortality rate is 20 per 1000 live births.

There were 9 still births, 8 of which were legitimate.

Of the 6 deaths of children under one year 5 were legitimate.

Mortality Table for Year 1937.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever ...	...	...	...
Measles ... ..	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever ... ..	...	...	...
Whooping Cough ... ..	...	...	...
Diphtheria ... ..	...	...	...
Influenza	2	7	9
Encephalitis lethargica ... ..	...	...	...
Cerebro-Spinal Fever ... ..	...	1	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	2	3
Other Tuberculous Diseases...	2	...	2
Syphilis ... ..	...	...	...
General Paralysis of the Insane, tabes dorsalis	1	...	1
Cancer, Malignant Disease	13	10	23
Diabetes... ..	...	2	2
Cerebral Hæmorrhage, &c.	4	9	13
Heart Disease	16	29	45
Aneurysm ... ..	...	...	...
Other Circulatory Diseases	3	3	6
Bronchitis	2	2	4
Pneumonia (all forms)	1	2	3
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	...	1
Peptic Ulcer ... ..	...	...	...
Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years) ... ..	...	...	...
Appendicitis ... ..	...	...	...
Cirrhosis of Liver ... ..	...	...	...
Other Diseases of Liver, etc... ..	...	...	...
Other Digestive Diseases	3	...	3
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	3	3	6
Puerperal Sepsis ... ..	...	...	...
Other Puerperal Causes ... ..	...	1	1
Congenital Debility and Malforma- tion, Premature Birth	3	2	5
Senility	3	2	5
Suicide ... ..	...	1	1
Other Deaths from Violence... ..	5	1	6
Other Defined Diseases	11	5	16
Causes ill-defined or unknown ... ..	...	...	...
All Causes	74	82	156

Percentage of Deaths in Public Institutions, 31.

Deaths in Childbirth: Sepsis 0, Other Causes 1.

Infant Mortality during the Year 1937.

CAUSES OF DEATH.				Under 1 week.	1-2 weeks.	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	4 weeks & under 3 months.	3 months & under 6 months.	6 months & under 9 months.	9 months & under 12 months.	Total Deaths under 1 year.
Small Pox	...	...	.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chicken Pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria and Croup	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tuberculous Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Abdominal Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Meningitis (<i>not Tuberculous</i>)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Convulsions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Laryngitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gastritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Syphilis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rickets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Suffocation, overlying	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Injury at Birth	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Atelectasis	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Congenital Malformations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Premature Birth	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	3	2	1	...	...	6

INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING 1937.

Notifiable Diseases during the Year.

DISEASE.			Harpden Rural.	Redbourn.	St. Michael's Rural.	St. Peter's Rural.	St. Stephen's Rural.	Sandridge Rural.	Wheat-hampstead.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases. Admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria...	...	...	...	...	1	7	...	...	2	10	8	...
Scarlet Fever	...	...	1	1	1	19	1	...	1	24	16	...
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	1	...	5	...	...
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	6	1	1	1	9	...	3
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyæxia...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	3	3	...
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	...	...	1	1	2	38	4	2	4	52	27	3

There has been no serious epidemic during the year. Chicken Pox and Measles have affected the attendances at the Elementary Schools. One case of Cerebro-Spinal Fever from Wheathampstead and one of Anterior Poliomyelitis from St. Peter's were also notified.

Tuberculosis.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	2	...	1	1	...	...	1	...
10	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
15	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	...
20	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
25	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
35	1	6	...	...	1	1	...	...
45	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
55	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
65	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals...	9	11	2	2	1	2	1	...

All the deaths from Tuberculosis were previously notified. There is no neglect of notification in the District, and there is no evidence of excess of mortality in any particular occupation in the District.

No action has been taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, Articles 3, 5, and 6.

No action has been necessary under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

Preventive Measures.

At the Sisters' Hospital there is a Washington-Lyon Steam Disinfector where bedding and clothes may be disinfected. This is always done in cases of Scarlet Fever, Smallpox, etc., and frequently done after such illnesses as Consumption and Cancer. This work is done by the porter at the Hospital.

Formaldehyde is the disinfectant almost universally used in this District, but in addition, every room is thoroughly cleansed with soap, water and fresh air, and where necessary, whitewashed and papered. This work is done under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector.

Arrangements are made by this Council with Herts County Council Laboratory, Hill End, the Clinical Research Association and the Counties Public Health Laboratories for examinations to be made at the expense of this Council.

I have received during the year 36 reports from them on Swabs examined for Klebs Loeffler Bacilli for Diphtheria, 2 of which were positive.

One sputum was examined for Tubercle Bacilli with negative result.

Diphtheria anti-toxin is in all suitable cases supplied at the expense of this Council.

Vaccination.

The following figures are for the twelve months ending June 30th, 1937, and have been supplied to me by Mr. Seabrook, the Vaccination Officer :—

During this period there were 247 children born in this District, distributed among the Parishes as shown in the following table :—

7 of these died in infancy without being vaccinated.

14 have gone away from the District before being vaccinated.

149 Conscientious Objection Certificates were granted.

77 were vaccinated.

Parishes.		Births	Deaths	Removal to places unknown, and Vac- cination Officers Apprised.	Vaccin- ated.	Conscient- ious Objection Certifi- cates.
Harpenden Rural	...	1	...	...	...	1
Redbourn	...	23	...	...	9	14
St. Michaels Rural	...	5	...	1	4	...
St. Peters Rural	...	128	3	8	40	77
St. Stephens Rural	...	40	1	1	12	26
Sandridge	...	13	...	1	3	9
Wheathampstead...	...	37	3	3	9	22
Totals	...	247	7	14	77	149

Hospitals, Nursing Arrangements, and other Institutions available for the District.

St. Albans Joint Hospital Board.

Matron : Miss Banner, The Sisters' Hospital, St. Albans.

Medical Superintendent : Dr. R. R. K. Paton (non-resident).

(a) **The Sisters' Hospital**, Union Lane, St. Albans, which consists of :—

1. Administration Block.
2. Scarlet Fever Block (accommodation 14 beds), over which are 2 Wards of 2 beds each reserved for Cerebro-spinal Fever.
3. Diphtheria Block (accommodation 11 beds).

There is a Washington-Lyon Steam Disinfector.

A Motor Ambulance is kept at the Hospital.

Porter : Mr. C. R. Dye.

The following Institutions supply the other needs of the District :—

St. Albans and Mid Herts Hospital and Dispensary.

Watford General Hospital.

Hemel Hempstead Hospital.

The Public Assistance Institution, Oster House.

St. Albans Union Infirmary.

St. Albans District Nursing Association.

Harpenden Nursing Centre.

St. Albans County Tuberculosis Dispensary.

Watford County Tuberculosis Dispensary.

The Cherry Tree Small Pox Hospital.

There is also a District Nurse in each of the following villages :—Bricket Wood, London Colney, Park Street, Redbourn, Sandridge, Wheathampstead, and Colney Heath.

Ambulance. There is a Red Cross Motor Ambulance in the City, the property of the St. Albans Town Council.

The Ambulance is kept at the Fire Station, St. Albans, and is in charge of the Chief Constable (Tel. 18).

It is available for the use of St. Albans and District at a fixed charge of 1/- per mile. Minimum 5/-

Public Elementary Schools.

There are 13 Public Elementary Schools in the District, 4 of which are County Council Schools.

Water Supply.

The District is largely supplied by service mains from Water Companies and private undertakings in the area. Most of the Companies concerned arrange for private and independent periodical analysis. These generally show the water in this area to be of a high degree of organic and bacterial purity, and the supplies are plentiful. Deep wells of plentiful supply still exist in the more rural parts of the District, and there are a few shallow wells. Shortage in these has occurred in a few cases, and where opportunity offers the Council enforce the provision of an adequate service main supply.

The Council have also under consideration the extension of water mains throughout their area.

The Council have arranged for chemical or bacterial analysis where necessary, and samples are taken in cases where there is any suspicion as to the purity of the water.

Sewage Schemes.

Some villages are provided with up-to-date sewage farms, and the remainder of the District is drained by cesspools or the waste water disposed of on the cottage gardens.

A detailed table of Sewage Schemes and Water Supplies is included in this report.

Rivers Pollution.

The effluent at the London Colney Sewage Farm has not always been quite satisfactory. A scheme to remedy the present unsatisfactory position is under consideration.

Parish	Water Supply	Sewage Schemes
Harpenden Rural...	Kinsbourne Green and area near Harpenden served by Harpenden Water Company. Outlying. Deep Wells, good supply.	Private Cesspools.
Redbourn	...Gorhambury and Shafford Estates have a piped private supply. Redbourn Village. Nine Public Pumps and Wells and Private Wells. Good supply.	Public Cesspools for drainage of East Common and Fish Street Area. Private Cesspools.
St. Michael's	...Parts of the district supplied by service from St. Albans, Hemel Hempstead, the Childwick and Gorhambury Water Supplies. Deep Wells. Good supply.	Private Cesspools in outlying areas.
St. Peter's Rural	..London Colney—St. Albans Water Company. Colney Heath—Barnet Water Company (by standards). Near St. Albans—St. Albans Water Company. Hill End and Middlesex County Asylums—Private supplies. Sleapshyde—Public Well and Pump—good supply. Outlying—Private Wells, few shallow but supply usually plentiful.	Sewage Schemes at London Colney Private Sewage Works at Asylums. Outlying districts—Cesspools. Colney Heath, one side of village drained to Cesspools on Common, emptied by Council.
St. Stephen's	...Frogmore, Colney Street—St. Albans Water Company. Near Radlett—Colne Valley Water Company. Private Wells. Usually plentiful supply although a few remaining shallow wells.	Private Cesspools.
Sandridge	...Near St. Albans—St. Albans Water Company Service. Deep Wells. One patent water elevator, in Village and engine pump and tank for Council Cottages. Supply good. Piped supply to village.	Private Cesspools. The Village being drained and discharges into a ditch in Hatfield Lane. Emptied & cleaned occasionally by Council Van.
Wheathampstead	...Harpenden Water Company for Wheathampstead Village and Marford. Outlying Wells. Childwickbury Estate in parish has estate water supply. Public pump at Gustard Wood.	Villages of Marford and Wheathampstead sewered to Sewage Works. Private Cesspools elsewhere.

NOTE.—Cesspools cleared by Council's vehicles.

Passing on to a detailed statement of each locality, I have to report as follows:—

HARPENDEN RURAL.

Area in acres 3,479. Estimated population 462.

Inhabited houses 117.

The number of Dairies and Cowsheds is 4.

REDBOURN.

Area in acres 4,563. Estimated population 2,954.

Inhabited houses 727.

The number of Dairies and Cowsheds is 15.

There are three Schools in this district. Those buildings have outlived their usefulness.

A scheme for providing water and sewerage is in contemplation as is also a rehousing scheme.

ST. MICHAEL'S RURAL.

Area in acres 6,131. Estimated population 492.

Inhabited houses 113.

The number of Cowshed is 6.

ST. PETER'S RURAL.

Area in acres 5,236. Estimated population 9,834.

Inhabited houses 1324.

The number of Dairies and Cowsheds registered is 6.

Over 4,500 of this population is housed in the large Mental Institutions in this parish.

ST. STEPHEN'S RURAL.

Area in acres 6,991. Estimated population 2,094.

Inhabited houses 615.

The number of Dairies and Cowsheds is 11.

Some 900 persons are housed in the Middlesex Mental Colony in this Parish.

During the latter part of this year, plots of land have been purchased and used by caravan dwellers. The conditions are regarded as extremely unsatisfactory and measures to deal with this matter are under consideration.

SANDRIDGE.

Area in acres 5,466. Estimated population 892.

Inhabited houses 235.

The number of Dairies and Cowsheds is 11.

A scheme for the provision of a sewer for the village of Sandridge has been approved. A proper and constant water supply has been provided.

WHEATHAMPSTEAD.

Area in acres 5,187. Population 3,532.

Inhabited houses 916.

The number of Dairies and Cowsheds is 10.

Wheathampstead Village has also its piped service of water supply and sewage scheme.

Cowsheds.

The number of cowsheds on the register in the year 1937 is 63, distributed as follows :—

Harpenden Rural	...	...	...	4
Redbourn	...	...	...	15
St. Michael's Rural	...	...	...	6
St. Peter's Rural	...	...	...	6
St. Stephen's Rural	...	...	...	11
Sandridge	...	...	...	11
Wheathampstead	...	...	...	10
				<hr/>
				63

Byelaws, Regulations and Adoptive Acts.

The examination of the cows now comes under the Veterinary Inspector appointed by the County.

The following Byelaws and Regulations and Adoptive Acts are in force in this District.

They were all in force prior to 1914.

New Streets and Buildings.

Offensive Trades.

Nuisances.

Slaughter Houses.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.

Van-dwellers.

Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act 1889.

Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act 1889.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 secs. 23 and 36.

Public Health Act 1875 secs. 42, 44, 47 (3), 112, 113, 114, 169 (paragraph 3), 170, 171, 229 and 230.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 (part iv.) secs. 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67 and 68.

Public Health Acts Amendment, 1907, sec. 27 (Temporary Buildings).

Urban Powers in force in parts of the Rural District.—
Public Health Act 1875, sec. 161 (para. 1);
Redbourn.

Public Health Act 1875, sec. 160 (s.s.1); Redbourn,
St. Peter Rural, Sandridge and St. Stephen's
Rural.

Public Health Acts, 66; St. Michael Rural, St.
Peter Rural and Sandridge.

The following parts of the Public Health Act, 1925, are
now in force :—

Part II.—Except secs. 21 and 22.

Part III.—Sec. 39, applying only to St. Peter's,
St. Stephen's and Wheathampstead, and sec. 44,
applying to Redbourn only.

Part IV.

Part V.—Secs, 51, 53, 54 and 55, apply only to St.
Peter's, St. Stephen's and Wheathampstead.

Factories and Workshops.

1.—Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspector.

Premises. (1)	Number of		
	Inspec- tions. (2)	Written Notices. (3)	Prose- cutions (4)
Factories ... (including Factory Laundries)	8	...	...
Workshops ... (including Workshop Laundries)	13	...	...
Workplaces ... (other than Outworkers' premises)	3	...	...
Total ...	24	...	...

Four lists have been received of outworkers engaged in
Straw Hat work and concern nine persons engaged in
this work.

2.—Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Particulars. (1)	Number of Defects.			Number of Prose- cutions. (5)
	Found. (2)	Re- medied. (3)	Referred to H.M. In- spector. (4)	
<i>Nuisances under the Public Health Acts*</i>				
Want of cleanliness	2	2	...	...
Want of ventilation ... ..	...	...	...	...
Overcrowding ... ..	...	...	...	...
Want of drainage of floors ... ..	...	...	...	...
Other nuisances	1	1	...	...
Sanitary Accommodation {	insufficient ... ..	...	...	...
	unsuitable or defective ... ..	...	...	...
	not separate for sexes ... ..	...	...	...
<i>Offences under the Factory and Work- shop Acts :</i>				
Illegal occupation of underground bakehouse (s. 101) ... ..	...	...	...	...
Other offences (Excluding offences relating to outwork and offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Work- shops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921).	...	...	...	...
Total	3	3	...	...

*Including those specified in sections 2, 3, 7 and 8 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, as remediable under the Public Health Acts.

There is no overcrowding in any workshop in the District, nearly all provide 500 c.f. air space and many provide much more.

There are no wholesale bakehouses in the District.

There are 8 outworkers of the specified classes in this District.

Sanitary Inspection of Area.

Nature of Inspection.				Number:
Housing Inspections under Public Health and				
Housing Acts ...	...	...	...	326
Re-visits ...	...	...	...	305
Disinfection of Premises	...	...	...	29
Eradication of Bed Bugs	...	...	...	23
Slaughterhouses ...	...	...	...	131
Cowsheds, Dairies, etc.	...	...	...	87
Tents, Vans, Sheds ...	...	...	...	39
Rat-infested Premises	...	...	...	17
Scavenging generally, and provision of Dustbins...				430
Factories, Workshops, etc. ...	...	...	...	24
Water Supplies, Water Sampling, etc. ...			...	9
Total ...				<hr/> 1420 <hr/>

Housing.

During the year special efforts were directed towards improving the standard of housing accommodation in the district. Realising that the matter was one of some urgency, the Council decided to engage a Temporary Inspector to assist with the survey of unfit houses. As a result, a fairly comprehensive and detailed inspection of the older working-class houses in the district was made. In all, 120 houses were deemed to be in a state so dangerous and injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation, and a large number were found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation. Of the 120 houses referred to above, the Council decided to deal with 89 by way of Clearance Areas and the remainder as individual insanitary houses under the provisions of Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Housing Statistics.

Year ended 31st December, 1937.

1. *Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year :—*

(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	326
	(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose..				540
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	...	287
	(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose..				436
(3)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	120
(4)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	143

2. *Remedy of defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices :—*

	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	1
--	---	-----	-----	-----	---

3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the year :—*

A.—Proceedings under Secs. 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...		Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—			
	(a) by owners	...	...	Nil
	(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	...		Nil

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

- | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | ... | ... | ... | ... | 37 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :— | | | | | |
| (a) by owners | ... | ... | ... | ... | 31 |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |

C.—Proceedings under Secs. 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | ... | ... | ... | 4 |

D.—Proceedings under Sec. 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |

4. *Housing Act, 1936. Part 4.—Overcrowding.*

- | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (a) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year | ... | ... | ... | 39 |
| (2) Number of families dwelling therein | ... | ... | ... | 39 |
| (3) Number of persons dwelling therein | ... | ... | ... | 287 |
| (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year | ... | ... | ... | 1 |

- (c) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 24
- (2) Number of persons concerned in such cases 153
- (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding *Nil*
- (e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report *Nil*

Milk Supply.

There are within the district sixty-three registered cowsheds. All these premises and all dairies have been visited during the year, and numerous minor improvements effected. In one or two cases it was found that the cowsheds were quite unsuitable, and in one case the owner was recommended to replace the existing shed with a new building.

Slaughterhouses.

There are nine private slaughterhouses and one knacker's yard in the district. In five of these premises very little slaughtering is done. Structurally some of the slaughterhouses are of a poor standard and, in at least two cases, are quite unsuitable for the purpose.

Water Sampling.

Three samples of water were submitted for chemical analysis and were reported upon as satisfactory.

Eradiction of Bed Bugs.

Six infested houses were dealt with during the year. Of these, two were Council houses and the remaining four were old privately owned cottages. A liquid fumigant was employed for freeing these dwellings from bed bugs.

In the case of all tenants removing from old condemned houses to new Council houses, arrangements have been made for treating the bedding by steam disinfection and the other effects with a liquid fumigant.

Rat Destruction.

During the year twelve complaints were received and, in co-operation with the County Rat Officer, advice was given as to the best methods of dealing with these infestations. During Rat Week notices were posted in each parish explaining the preventative measures which could and should be taken.

Public Cleansing.

Public cleansing is carried out by direct labour under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector. The work involves refuse collection, cesspool emptying and the collection of nightsoil.

Refuse Collection. A weekly collection of house refuse operates over the whole of the district with the exception of farmhouses and isolated cottages. Three petrol-engined vehicles are engaged on the work. The refuse is disposed of by a modified system of controlled tipping. The service has operated efficiently and smoothly throughout the year and very few complaints were received. In all, some 4,389 ashbins are cleared each week, and the estimated total weight of refuse dealt with during the year was 1,986 tons.

Nightsoil Collection. A weekly service is given where required throughout the district with the exception of Redbourn, which village is visited twice weekly. One petrol-engined vehicle is engaged on the work, and the nightsoil is deposited on agricultural lands. In all, some 1,778 pails are dealt with weekly.

The number of pail closets in the district is about the same as in preceding years, but it is pleasant to contemplate that

the number of these very undesirable conveniences will be drastically reduced when the proposed schemes of sewerage at Sandridge and Redbourn come into operation.

Cesspool Emptying. The emptying of cesspools is carried out over the whole district excepting part of London Colney, part of Colney Heath and part of Wheathampstead, where sewerage systems are in operation.

A free service is given to all houses which require it and which are not within a reasonable distance of a sewer. The work is done with two petrol-engined vehicles, but owing to the steady growth of the district, it was found that this plant was quite insufficient to cope with the work and at the end of the year it was decided to purchase an additional vehicle. When the third vehicle is put into service the Council are satisfied that prompt attention can be given to all requests and are determined that this very important work shall be placed on a satisfactory basis.

The number of loads of cesspool contents dealt with during the year was 6,378.

I desire to express my indebtedness to my brother Officials for the assistance given me in writing this Report.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD PATON,

M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

